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THE SABRES' BLADE

December 16, 1998

South Mecklenburg High School

8900 Park Road

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Volume XXVI

Lacek nominated Teacher of the Year

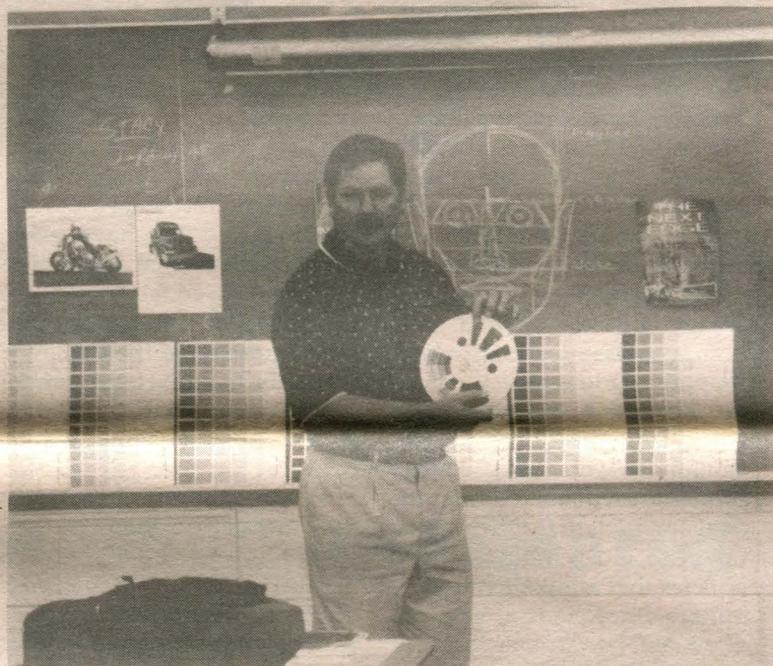
Rick Lacek has been preparing students for successful careers in the communication arts field for the past ten years

By Andrew Buchert
Editor

South Meck's Rick Lacek was nominated for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System's Teacher of the Year award. Lacek is the coordinator of the communication arts program at South, and currently teaches Graphic Arts and Advertising Communications I and II.

In his tenth year at South, Lacek's teaching career began "as sort of an accident," he said. Prior to moving to Charlotte, Lacek had worked in publishing and graphic communications for eleven years. In search of a change, he planned to freelance in Charlotte. But when a friend of his suggested that he try teaching, Lacek decided to consider the possibility, although he did not feel that it was the opportunity he wanted. "It just worked out," he said. "When I made the call, the door was basically wide-open for this opportunity."

When he accepted the position at South, Lacek originally intended to give teaching a brief try before moving on with his career. But at the end of his first year, several of his students, all of whom have since taken positions in the field of graphic communications arts, came to him and asked if he could teach them



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

Rick Lacek's design students have developed promotional materials for many organizations.

even more than what he had taught them in class. "I realized then that this might be the place for me," he said.

As the design program has grown in the last ten years, so has the number of students who have left the program well-prepared for successful careers in the publishing, graphic design, and advertising fields. "Every year since I've been teaching, I've had kids who continually say that they've benefited from

the program and that it's helped them considerably when they've gotten out of school," said Lacek.

One of the primary emphases of the design program is to teach students to produce printable work through applied processes. Students in Lacek's classes spend a lot of time working with just black and white concepts before they even begin applying color to their designs. "Being able to select the correct

colors is going to make it [the design] more appealing and help it carry the message and communicate the main idea of the promotion," he said.

Lacek is currently working on developing a program to teach Commercial Art, which he is planning to begin next year. Students in the course will learn to use communication techniques through many mediums, such as animation, illustration, and electronic design to produce work that is marketable.

The design students have taken on many projects. They have worked with various agencies, developed promotional plans and materials for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System and many small business, and produced a radio commercial for the Mint Museum. Mark Richardson's office contacted Lacek when the Panthers' owners were bidding for the team and asked for his students' help in designing the paws for the runway. "In some ways it's like we have our own little business," he said.

Lacek was nominated for the Teacher of the Year award by the staff of South Meck. "I consider it an honor," said Lacek. "But the real reward for me is seeing my students go out into the business world and be successful," he said.

Martelle advances in Morehead Scholarship competition

By Andrew Buchert
Editor

South Meck senior Jennifer Martelle has advanced to the regional round of the prestigious John Motley Morehead Scholarship competition. She will interview Thursday, December 10 to advance to the final round.

The John Motley Morehead Scholarship is a full ride to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and covers all four years' tuition, room, board, and books. In addition, Morehead Scholarship recipients are provided the opportunity to participate in extracurricular and summer programs.

The Morehead Scholarship is based on four criteria: leadership, scholarship, moral force of

character, and physical vigor. Candidates must also be well-rounded, possess a strong academic record in challenging and competitive courses, and exhibit honesty, integrity, and courtesy.

Martelle and senior Erinn Harris were selected from among sixteen applicants in early October to represent South in the first round of the scholarship competition. Because Martelle advanced to the regional interview, she received a \$500 merit stipend to attend UNC Chapel Hill.

"I am honored to have been chosen to move on to the next round [of the Morehead competition]," said Jenny. "I am looking forward to this chance to represent our outstanding community."



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer
Jennifer Martelle advanced to the regional round of the Morehead Scholarship competition.

Debate wins bid to host national event

By Larisa Yasinovskaya
Staff Reporter

South Mecklenburg recently won the bid against Denver, Houston, and Atlanta to host the 2002 National Forensic League/Lincoln Life National Speech and Debate Tournament, which will be held at South Meck and Quail Hollow. One of the largest high school conventions in the nation, the debate event is estimated to bring in between \$4 and \$5 million to Charlotte. The tournament will draw fierce competitors from Alaska to Guam.

On the weekend of November 20-21 South Meck hosted a successful twelfth annual Sabre Invitational Speech and Debate tournament.

The Sabre Invitational offered competition in such debate events as congress, policy, and Lincoln-Douglas. Speech events included original oratory and extemporaneous speaking. The drama events were dramatic, humorous, and duo interpretation. Storytelling and prose/poetry competitions were also held.

"Academic competition hones critical thinking skills taught in core classes," said Barbara Miller, South's debate coach. "It provides an opportunity for the practical application of those skills in an enjoyable atmosphere. Academic and team work are important elements of the competitive experience," she said.

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Science is not exempt from the laws of ethics

Misuse of DNA technology presents the ability to eliminate the entire human population.

By Natalie Smith
Staff Reporter

Less than two years ago, biologists made scientific history as they announced their new ability to clone sheep. Many, though, did not share scientists' enthusiasm. There was little doubt that if scientists could clone sheep, they could also clone humans, if they had not done so already. The role of ethics in science was called into serious question.

Scientists defended themselves, though, by saying that this new breakthrough would be of great benefit in the medical field. Patients with, for example, deteriorated organs could receive transplants from their clones. Since the patient and the clone would be genetically identical, the patient would experience no side effects due to rejection of the organs.

Well, scientists have done it again, and once more this problem has reared its ugly head. Scientists have, by means of cloning techniques, successfully fused a human cell to the egg cell of a cow. Although the controversy surrounding this instance pales in comparison to that of the previous issue, the same principles come into play.

Today, misuse of DNA technology also presents the threat of deadly new pathogens with the ability to cause a pandemic that can eliminate the entire human population. Genetically altering the chromosomes of embryos has allowed some parents to be able to choose and change the sex of their unborn babies. Are experiments such as these ethical? No, and practices such as these are not acceptable.

In what ways has science gone too far? Experiments such as these are unethical. In cloning, for example, scientists are

doing little more than tampering with nature and the natural order of things. Their rebuttal that clones can act as organ donors failed to recognize one fact. Human clones are not mutant freaks of nature. They are real people and the idea of producing these people simply for the purpose of using them for spare parts is repulsive.

The same is true of the biological fabrication of lethal diseases. At this moment, there are scientists in laboratories who, by means of DNA technology, are creating viruses far more lethal than the Ebola virus, the Plague, the Spanish Influenza, or AIDS. These deadly pathogens are primarily generated for use in possible biological warfare. Science should not be used as a tool for production of fatal weapons. Experimentation such as those cited above are also extremely dangerous. Should any of these pestilences find their way into the mainstream of the population, things could get extremely ugly. Things such as these need to be given attention.

Science has made many valuable contributions to society in the way of medical research and other scientific areas; this should not be ignored. Without many of the advancements of science, in fact, we would not have the benefit of advanced medical treatments and modern conveniences. Experiments and studies for the purpose of developing vaccines or for finding and correcting genes for diseases are legitimate. Many of these developments have been accomplished by means of genetic engineering. However, this should not be taken to the extreme. In conducting these experiments and studies, scientists should remain within the confines of ethics and common sense.

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Is South's new tardy policy effective?

Point

By Andrew Buchert
Editor

On the mornings of November 16 and 17, more than 200 students, many with their Bojangles and bagel shop cups still in hand, checked-in tardy to the attendance office. This incident infuriated both the administrators and the faculty, who were already at their wits' end over South's excessive tardy problem. In an attempt to prevent such a ridiculous number of tardies, the administration instituted a new, stricter tardy policy on December 1.

Student tardies are a detriment to the student himself, his classmates, and his teacher. Any teacher will place class disruptions at the top of his or her list of pet peeves. Besides being a blatant show of disrespect towards the teacher, the disturbance created by a student walking into class late results in a loss of concentration both on the parts of the teacher and the other students in the class.

In many ways, school is comparable to a job. In fact, high school is supposed to help prepare students for their future education and careers not only academically but professionally as well. Most college professors will not tolerate students being late for their class. Likewise, most employers have policies that allow them to terminate employees after a set number of late arrivals to work, regardless as to whether the individual is a full or part-time employee.

The new policy also accounts for those who are consistently tardy because their parents are late taking them into school. For busy parents, a conference with an administrator is anything but convenient.

South's new tardy policy may seem harsh, but it is anything but unfair. What is unfair are the disruptions created by students arriving late.

Counterpoint

By Jennifer Samuels
Staff Reporter

It happens every morning. As the bell rings at 7:20 to signal the start of school, a student comes barreling into the classroom. Tardy, he heads to the office to face his punishment.

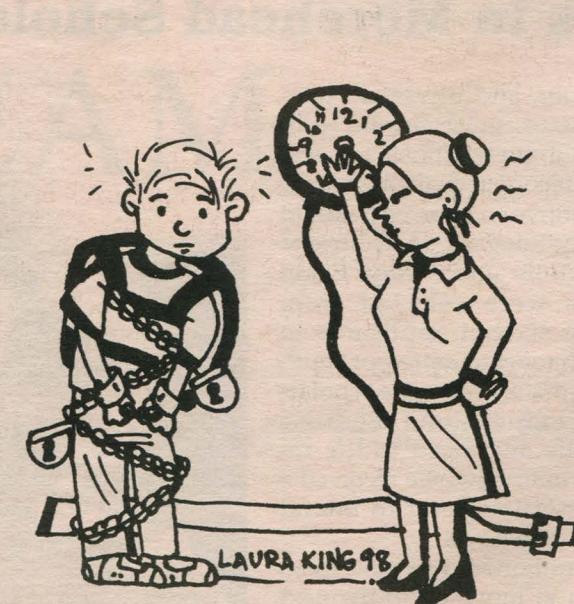
However, as of December 1, 1998, South Meck has a new tardy policy. It says that a parent must accompany his or her child to sign in at the attendance office or the tardy will be unexcused. This policy is unnecessarily harsh and can create a major inconvenience for students as well as parents.

Part of the current tardy policy is the revocation of parking passes if a student is late to school. A student has two options: drive to school "illegally" and risk having his or her car towed, or have a parent bring him. The student might choose just to stay home. That would hurt South's long-term attendance goal.

It is possible to have legitimate problems that are considered unexcused tardies. By requiring that parents accompany students to the office for the tardy to be excused, school officials are indicating that they do not trust students or parents.

When students are tardy they are sent to the office, resembling cattle being herded. Because of this, students miss upwards of 20 minutes of class while waiting for a pass. I fail to see how this helps students in the long run. They still cause a disruption in class and miss valuable learning.

We spend so much time learning about democracy in history class; a school should take some of these democratic ideals and exemplify them. A group of students, faculty, and parents should sit down and solve the tardy problem once and for all. School should be a wonderful place that works with its students, not against them.



Too late! Has the tardy policy come to this?

Quick Take on Opinions

TV trash talk

These talk shows end up degrading our nation's dignity by resorting to the least, most vile, despicable, and reprehensible acts devised by humanity. The executives do this in order to shamelessly self-promote their show and cash in on the viewers' devious shock and fascination to bolster their ratings to at least a minimal level so that the syndicates don't yank them right off the air. If not, then they settle for the usual round of exploiting the most deplorable of human acts, such as lewdness, bigotry, violence, debauchery, and obscenity.

Stephen Medina
The Declaration

Independence High School
Charlotte, NC

The SEP: Too much to handle? Not really

The only reason that most seniors complain about the so-called harsh demands of the Senior Exit Essay project is because they have no other excuse to explain why they can't keep up with it. They are the kind of people who party all day and all night. And when another part of the project is due, they always have some lame excuse as to why they are not ready.

This project should be very meaningful to you, especially since it is required for you to graduate, and we all know how horrible it would be to have to go through another year of high school. And worse than that, it would mean that you have to start a whole new project, and what a bummer that would be!

Will Jordan
The Harding RamPage
Harding University High
School
Charlotte, NC

All people become criminals on the road

Too often people see traffic laws as infringements of their liberties and schedules, not protections of their rights and safety. When the speed limit sign says not to go over 35 miles per hour, it says that for a reason.

Approval for red-light cameras and steps toward mass transit indicate some effort in trying to right the wrongs of reckless driving. The main problem with traffic is the fact that aggressiveness is contagious among drivers. Habits from one violation are easily copied, and violations lead to more violations.

It is a dangerous world out there, so people should try to eliminate the easily overlooked dangers from their lives so they can concentrate on avoiding larger ones.

Nick Kuklinski
The Eagle
East Mecklenburg High
School
Charlotte, NC

Teachers believe in Santa Claus, too!

Mrs. Young: "I wish school started at 8:30 am so I wouldn't have to wake up at such a ridiculous hour!"

Ms. Goodwin: "Cable TV."

Mrs. Starnes: "A telephone in every classroom."

Mrs. Savas: "A bigger room."

Mr. Machado: "To be able to control the temperature in my room."

Mr. Brackett: "A computer with the Internet in my classroom and double salary."

Mr. Bartholomew: "No more field trips during school hours."

Mrs. Berry: "To be able to get a line out and use the phone."

Mrs. Desmond: "A better phone system."

Mrs. Farrar: "Another computer, class set of calculators, and another overhead projector."

Mrs. Russo: "A copy machine in every building."

Mr. Holder: "New tiles on the ceilings and floors, and bonus and retroactive pay."

Ms. Carroll: "Students with a good work ethic."

Ms. Moshos: "To have a computer in the language department."

Mr. LaFrancis: "I would like ceiling tiles and better lighting."

Mrs. Ellington: "For all of my students to get a 100 on their geometry exam."

Mrs. Morris: "A workday with no meetings, so I can actually plan and grade."

Mrs. Duke: "I wish they would reopen the child care center."

Mr. Rose: "The science department's own copier for when the main one breaks down and ventilation for the science labs."

Mr. Ragsdale: "Fewer intercom announcements."

Coach Gaston: "New, automatic bleachers in the gym."



Mrs. Doughty: "I would truly like to have someone to make our copies or to have another copy machine."

Ms. Fox: "More students that put effort into their work... that's right after more money."

Coach Greeson: "An auxiliary gymnasium."

Mrs. Hoffman: "To have every student eager to learn."

Mrs. Saxon: "A new computer and smaller classes."

Ms. Talford: "A box of chalk."

Mrs. Branham: "I wish we had the whole month of December off and not come back after Thanksgiving break."

Mrs. Bickle: "Not to have to write one discipline referral."

Mrs. Matney: "I would like to have a balanced heat/air conditioner in school."

Mrs. Bohn: "Louder announcements."

Mr. Weaver: "I wish everyone could be as conscientious as Ms. Carroll."

Mr. Wasson: "I would like a parking place."

Mrs. Cook and Mrs. Jetton: "Ceiling tiles in C Building."

Mrs. Brown-Rogers: "A desk with a lock on it."

Mrs. Champion: "Six stools for my classroom."

Mr. Pellicciotta: "Bathroom close to the trailers."

Mrs. Craig: "No more cockroaches in my classroom."

Mr. Boykin: "Wall to wall carpeting and new desks."

Mrs. Bradley: "A dry-erase board and my own computer."

Mr. Zelk: "I wish that every student and faculty member has a safe and happy holiday. Oh, and a new dry-erase board would be nice too."

Mrs. Smith: "Uninterrupted class time to teach!"

Mrs. Grifenhagen: "Up to date working computers connected to the Internet, access to activities to provide a more functional curriculum."

Mr. Houghton: "Grant to take students for European travel! Also, a couple of state champs for the wrestling team."

Mr. Holmes: "A storage shed for the greenhouse area, some blue stone/gravel for parking area and cold frame areas. (Please Santa!?)"

Mrs. Matney: "Balanced heating/ cooling system."

Mrs. Strickland: "For Geometry students to please show the work with homework problems, and have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year."

Mrs. Demay: "Ceiling tiles, chairs that don't bite, and self-cleaning desk tops."

Mr. Schnakenberg: "Success and happiness for all my students."

Mrs. Smallwood: "I wish that every student was motivated and eager to learn. I wish that their parents would put responsibility on their child's shoulders and hold them accountable!"

Mrs. Delong: "Computers in all classrooms!"

Mr. Howard: "I wish to continue our winning streak in art."

Mrs. Allen: "Computers in all Social Studies classrooms."

Mrs. Campbell: "That all students understand the importance of an education and give their best efforts in the pursuit of it."

Mr. Schultz: "I wish I had strength to make 25 more years."

Mrs. Benzing: "More paper towels!"

Ms. Ayers: "I do need a wall painted where a cabinet was removed."

Mr. Setzer: "No announcements at the end of the last block."

Mrs. Estes: "Larger art room with windows."

Mrs. Kittner: "An IBM computer on-line."

Americans suffer from a highly contagious malady: Affluenza

Many affluent Americans who deny themselves nothing in the way of material satisfaction seem to be more dead than alive.

By John DeGraaf,
Thomas H. Naylor,
and David Wann

Like many Americans, are you spending more and enjoying it less? Do your kids still say, "We're bored. What can we do?" even though their playthings include lots of sports equipment, expensive mountain bikes, a fancy new computer, the latest video games, and a room full of high-tech musical and video toys? Not content with your new Honda, don't you have your eye on a BMW or possibly a pricey 4-wheel drive recreational vehicle?

How many times have your credit cards maxed out lately? What draws you to the mall even though you hate crowds? Do you enjoy working so hard to pay for all of the stuff your family buys - stuff which, more often than not, just sits around being used by no one?

Without realizing it, you are probably suffering from a highly contagious malady - affluenza, first identified in a recent PBS television documentary. Millions have been infected with this virus, which

originated in the United States but has spread throughout the world. Affluenza is an obsession with materialism - consumer goods and services - ranging from cosmetics, clothes, cigarettes, soft drinks, junk food, video games and rock music to automobiles, computers, expensive homes, priceless art objects, high-tech health care and international travel. Those infected with this disease often suffer from overwork and stress in addition to viral over-consumption. It affects both rich and poor alike. The more you have, the more you want.

The root causes of affluenza are threefold - meaninglessness, separation, and fear of death. We are living in the midst of a spiritual crisis of unprecedented proportions. Our lives lack purpose or meaning. They are grounded in nothingness.

In our cities, schools, universities, factories and shopping malls, there is a widespread feeling of detachment and disconnectedness - a longing for community. We are haunted by the yearning for connectedness, an irresistible need for communication, engagement and friend-

ship.

To cope with our separation and our fear of nothingness, many of us spend our entire lives pretending we are invincible. One of the ways in which we try to convince ourselves that we will live forever is through conspicuous consumption. Illusory though it may be, consumption seduces us into believing we can find security and certainty in an otherwise uncertain, meaningless world. We think we can spend our way into a state of never-ending self-actualization. Our sense of meaning rests entirely on what we own, possess, and consume rather than on who we are.

For capitalism to work effectively, those who do the work must believe that the path to happiness involves accumulating enough money and credit so that we can purchase a nicely furnished home, a couple of cars, a computer, a boat and a college education for our kids. To be able to afford all these things, we must work hard until we retire or die. The harder we work, the more money we will have, the more we can buy, and the happier we will be - so

the story goes.

But if that were really true, why are so many people in the United States so anxious, so angry, so unhappy, so cynical and so stressed out? Why are rates of divorce, suicide, abortion, substance abuse and crime so high? Although personal consumption has doubled over the past half century, the percentage of Americans who say they are "very happy" has actually declined.

Even though we live in a period of unprecedented prosperity, it is also the time of the *living dead*. Many affluent Americans who deny themselves nothing in the way of material satisfaction seem to be more dead than alive.

Many who are physically alive appear to be spiritually, emotionally and intellectually dead. Our entire economy is driven by our intense psychological need to fill our spiritual and emotional vacuum with more and more stuff and our illusion that the accumulation of material possessions can provide meaning to life.

There are no quick-fix, patent medicines to cure affluenza. We

all know the drill - reduce, reuse and recycle; simple living; just say 'No.' The challenge is to break the cycle of meaninglessness, which breeds over-consumption, which in turn breeds more meaninglessness.

We must find alternatives to owning, possessing and consuming more material goods - alternatives which involve our own creations, our personal relationships, our communities and our stand toward a fate beyond our control. It's hard to imagine a long-term cure for affluenza which does not involve loving, caring, sharing, cooperating and participating in communities rather than owning, manipulating and controlling people, power and things.

There is a price to be paid for snuffing out affluenza. But it's worth it.

Seattle television producer John DeGraaf, Duke University economist Thomas H. Naylor and Colorado environmentalist David Wann are writing a book, "Affluenza." This article is reprinted from The Charlotte Observer.

Sabre Recognition

Varsity Soccer

Greg Arent - MVP Soccer

Cliff Venable - MVP Soccer

Josh Fisher - Mark Brayford Award

Ian McConnell - Scholar-Athlete

Coach's Award - Charlie Everett

All-Conference and All Region: Cliff Venable, Drew Llewellyn, and Chris Wyer

Art Department

Festival in the Park - Amanda Shinn-1st Place

Matthews Art Festival - Hadley Trotter-1st Place (\$1200), Kate Meier-3rd Place (\$500), Jesse Rademacher-Honorable Mention,

Jenny Martelle-Honorable Mention

Queens College Senior Competition - Kate Meier-1st Place (\$1000)

Football

Morris Sanders, 6-4, 295 lb senior offensive lineman, has been selected to represent North Carolina in the 1998 Shrine Bowl.

ROTC

Cadets from 14 different schools of Western North Carolina held a drill meet November 14, 1998 in Newton, N.C. Aside from South Meck's Drill Team's dominating the events they participated in, Cadet Petty Officer John Rodriguez took first place among all cadets (approximately 200) in "Knock-out Drill." Additionally, Cadet Commander Richard Armstrong took first place in the "Individual-Trick-Drill" event.

Flexography

Jerry Chastain was awarded a Certificate of Achievement from the Tag and Label Manufacturers Institute.

Sam Piekrel and Jerry Chastain have been chosen to represent South Meck in a flexography skills contest. The winners will receive college scholarships, trophies, and an all-expense-paid trip to San Antonio, TX for the 1999 flexography forum in May.

Tamika White, Lindsey Calhoun, Brooke Phillips, and Shamika White all have produced award winning entries to be submitted to the 1999 FFTA flexography forum in May.

Mock Trial Team

The South Meck Mock Trial Team won the Regional Competition for the second year in a row. Members are Jason Edwards, Shell Thaxton, Kristen Davis, Peter Patnaik, Brock Towler, and Michael Ingram.

Debate Awards

Myers Park Invitational

Josh Peeler, 1st place, Student Congress

Erik Sweeney, 3rd place, Student Congress

Kristen Davis, 1st place, Novice Lincoln-Douglas

Courtney Leah, 3rd place, Prose/Poetry

Bob Jones Invitational

Peter Patnaik and Mike Graham, 3rd place, Varsity Debate

Kristen Davis, 3rd place, Novice Lincoln-Douglas

Vance Novice Tournament

Courtney Leah, 1st place, Prose/Poetry

Jon Watts, 1st place, Student Congress

William White, 1st place, Extemporaneous Speaking

Freedom High School

Chris Moore, 1st place, Oral Interpretation

Regan Persaud and Bobby French, 1st place, Varsity Debate

Bobby French, 2nd place speaker, Varsity Debate

Kathy Britton, 2nd place, Varsity Lincoln-Douglas

High Point Central

Katie McClure and Jill Dyer, 1st place, Duo Interpretation

Larisa Yasinovskaya, 3rd place, Student Congress

Steven Rosas, 2nd place, Student Congress

South has won sweepstakes at Myers Park Bob Jones High Point Central

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Opportunities in flexography lead to future careers

State-of-the-art lab provides students with a solid foundation in the principles of the graphic arts process.

By Jessica Ambrose
and Chris O'Connor
Staff Reporters

Flexography, a printing process that incorporates flexible plates and fast-drying inks, is a mainstay of the printing industry, and is now accessible to high school students, thanks to programs such as the one in place at South.

The program was expanded this year with the addition of a course that offers a second year of study in flexography. This new course allows students to broaden the knowledge they gained in their first year studies by turning theory into practice with the available lab equipment. According to Ms. Leigh Ayers, the flexography instructor at South, "There is definitely a lot of really good equipment here that could prove beneficial to students who take advantage of it."

Boasting almost \$200,000 worth of equipment, the flexography lab allows students to explore the basic procedures associated with screen, offset, and flexographic printing. Each method of printing involves an operation specific to that process, resulting in a variety of products. Offset printing enables students to create business cards, stationery, and envelopes; the screen printing process is used by students to design and print T-shirts.

The program was established at South several years ago and has since accumulated an



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

Ms. Leigh Ayers hopes to assist students in finding jobs related to flexography.

impressive collection of equipment including high quality machinery ranging from \$200 to \$40,000 in value. With a nearly brand new \$80,000 printing press, South's flexography lab has the capacity to provide students with a solid foundation in the principles of this graphic arts process.

Instruction for level one students involves gaining an understanding of the machinery, how it operates, and the basic concepts of the flexographic process consisting of color separation and plate design. Stu-

dents are permitted hands-on experience with equipment such as the cameras and light tables. Level two students are introduced to the printing press and may, as their skills develop, operate the press. "As students grow and want to learn the press, they can operate it more and more," said Ms. Ayers. Each course's curriculum prepares students for the many careers available in flexography.

Flexography provides many options for those interested in pursuing it as a profession. Possibilities include ink

and paper manufacturing, sales in flexographic materials, press operation, and artistry to be used on the printing press. This field is also used in connection with the large business corporations who are in need of printed packaging materials, over-wrap prints, and labels.

Due to rapid technological advances, flexography demands frequent upgrades in equipment. Ms. Ayers estimates that optimally, an update is needed every two years. However, this is an unrealistic goal in a high school setting. She

believes that upgrading is more likely to occur on the basis of need for South Meck. "I would say that we have quite a long way to go to keep up with technology's growth. Our computer software has been out of date for almost two years now," said Ms. Ayers. Despite slightly outdated software, the computers and printing presses continue to support the department's needs.

Ms. Ayers attended Central Piedmont Community College and obtained an Associate of Applied Science degree in graphic art management, but attributes much of her experience to nine years of background in the printing business prior to her training. With an understanding of the business, she hopes to assist juniors and seniors in finding jobs related to flexography. "My main goal is to place as many students who want jobs in flexography in positions that will enhance their knowledge of the field," said Ms. Ayers.

Although the department has achieved overall success with its awards and exceptional equipment, Ms. Ayers is concerned about the level of awareness about the program. Most students are not familiar with flexography or its principles when they enroll in the class. "I would like to attract the dedicated students who truly want to learn," she said. "I am trying, step by step, to inform more students every year about the flexography program."



Surfboards

Skateboards

Skates and
Hockey



Wallerbears Surf Shop



Entire Stock of In-Line Skates
Reduced through Christmas

Closeout Prices on '98 Wakeboards

Christmas Snowboard
Headquarters

McMullen Creek Market
Pineville 341-3414



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Rusty



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Holidays!
from The
Sabres' Blade**



Tis' the Season to be Giving

The holiday season has begun. How do you plan to spend your days off? Probably sitting on the couch watching reruns while your bookbag filled with homework sits beside you. Surprisingly enough, there are more productive ways to pass the time. Tis' the season to be sharing, and sharing your time is exactly what you should do.

Alexander Children's Center
6220 Thermal Road
P.O. Box 220632
Charlotte, NC 28222
to help call: 362-6760
Provides quality, professional treatment to children ages 3 to 18 with serious emotional and behavioral problems.

Material wishes: New and unwrapped toys, children's clothing, school supplies, games, puzzles, toiletries, sports equipment and luggage.



Project Hope
Department of Public Health
1025 E. 36th St.
Charlotte, NC 28205
to help call: 336-7299

After-school program for 6-12th grade students in eight north Charlotte neighborhoods. Its main focus is preventing pregnancy by encouraging children to develop new values and encouraging parents to be involved.

Material wishes: Sweaters or sweat shirts, and games.



Loaves & Fishes
P.O. Box 11234
Charlotte, NC 28220
to help call: 523-4333
Emergency food assistance program that provides a week's worth of groceries to people in crisis.

Material wishes: Financial donations, canned food.

A Child's Place
P.O. Box 33302
Charlotte, NC 28233
to help call: 343-3792
A transitional program for homeless children that seeks to meet the physical, emotional and educational needs of homeless and at-risk children.

Material wishes: Books with tapes, general household items, socks and underwear, winter clothing, money for care.

Keeping the The Holiday Tradition of the Nutcracker

By Jennifer Samuels
Staff Reporter

The signal of the beginning of the holiday season is different for everyone. For some, it is the smell of aromatic gingerbread baking. For others, it is the wonderful array of lights that people put up. However, if you are lacking that holiday spirit, *The Nutcracker* is coming to town. Performances will be from December 11-20 at the Belk Theater. The Charlotte Symphony Orchestra provides their interpretation of Tchaikovsky's beautiful score.

For those of you who do not know, *The Nutcracker* is the story

of Clara and the adventure that she has when her wooden Nutcracker doll comes to life. Clara

fight with the mice and the Rat King, and a performance by dancers from various countries.



and the Nutcracker travel the night, having many adventures. Highlights include a

The final performance on December 20 will not be the regular *Nutcracker*. Entitled *The Mad Nut-*

cracker, it provides the performers with a chance to goof off and make fun of the ballet that they performed so beautifully the night before. Tickets to this performance are a flat rate, which makes it easier to get good seats. From experience, this reporter can say that the performance is hilarious, and the casual atmosphere is great for people who get uncomfortable by men in tights.

For ticket information call Ticketmaster at 372-1000. *The Nutcracker* will be performed Dec. 11-20. Showtimes are Wednesday-Sunday at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 11:00 a.m., and 2 p.m. Sunday

North Carolina's Mountain Jewel

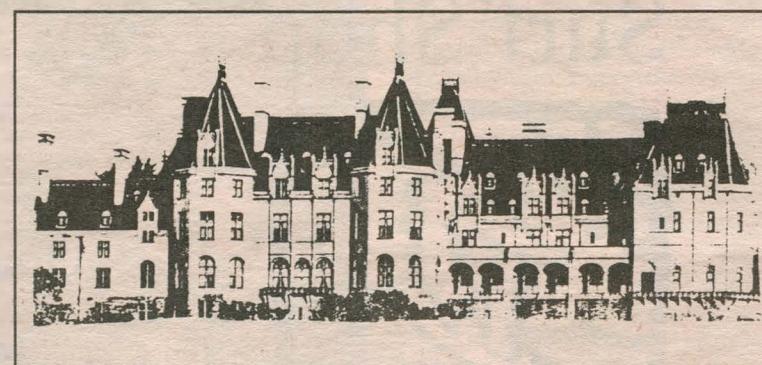
Asheville's Biltmore house attracts tourists throughout the nation for its holiday decorations.

By JT Crook
Sports Co-Editor

Just two and a half hours northwest of Charlotte, there is a place where a giant of the Industrial Age left his mark on the state of North Carolina. This mark is the Biltmore Estate in Asheville that was built for George Vanderbilt and his family. Near the turn of the century, George Vanderbilt decided to create a summer home. Almost ten years later, he had created a working estate in the area around Asheville, North Carolina. The crown jewel of the estate is the house. It was modeled from a eighteenth century French chateau and was furnished in the Victorian style from the late 1800's. The estate itself had a dairy that serviced much of North Carolina and its fields produced wheat and corn for the mountain region of the state. Today, there is no dairy or fields of grain but there is still much to see on the estate.

Every December, the house itself is decorated to fit the season. Over one hundred trees are brought in to be decorated throughout the house. In every room there is a tree to capture the flavor of that particu-

Vanderbilt's finest Christmas china and golden flatware. As you walk through the home, there are poinsettias around every corner and throughout the house you can hear the sounds of Christmas music being played



lar room. In the main dining hall, there is a thirty foot tree with presents underneath wrapped in bright paper. Around the great hall there are lights, wreaths, and ribbons to accentuate the stone carvings and tapestries. The table is set with the best of Mrs.

from the harpist in the foyer downstairs. In the kitchen, you can watch the estate employees make cookies and cakes to put on display, along with the ten by four foot ginger bread replica of the house. If you are lucky, it might snow in Asheville -- there is not a more beautiful sight in

the state -- and you can look over the balcony and see the hills around the house covered in snow.

The house is not the only attraction at the estate. If you would like, you can stroll through the botanical garden and nature trail that winds down behind the house. During the winter season, the greenhouses provide a beautiful relief from the cold as you admire exotic plants inside. There are two award-winning restaurants on the estate as well. For traditional cuisine, the Deer Park Inn has a buffet that includes roast beef, turkey and even rack of lamb. For Mediterranean style food, the Bistro at the winery can provide a plate of pasta or a brick oven pizza.

The Biltmore Estate is the perfect place to keep the spirit of the season alive. The season's traditions and old-fashioned celebrations still exist in the French chateau in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Hands on Charlotte
1616 Central Ave., Suite 200
Charlotte, NC 28205
to help call: 333-7471
Mobilizes citizens for direct volunteer service.

Material wishes: School and art supplies, athletic equipment, tables and chairs, T-shirts, food



Salvation Army Women and Children's Shelter
534 Spratt St.
P.O. Box 31443
Charlotte, NC 28231
to help call: 334-4731
Supplies food, clothing and shelter for women and children who have no other place to go.

Material wishes: Money, food, paper products, towels, washcloths, linens, combs, brushes, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, soap, detergent and cleaning supplies, disposable diapers, pajamas for women and children, sweat suits for women.

holiday spirit

LCK '98

Layout designed by Megan McKnight and Nicole Ewing

Anyone for skiing?

With Charlotte being a mere three hours away from the mountains, skiing is a possibility for the bored, "I've got the winter break blues" student. This is just a small guide to the local skiing in and around North Carolina.

*Appalachian Ski Resort: Located in Boone, NC, it is not the best mountain out there, but it is good for those skiers just starting out. It only has a few runs, and two of them are black diamonds.

*Sugar Mountain: Located near Appalachian and not that much better. Sugar is another resort for the beginning skier who does not like hard runs or variety.

*Snowshoe: Okay, so it's not in NC, but it is the best place to ski within driving distance. Located in West Virginia six hours away, Snowshoe has runs in every level and snowboard rental to cater to skiers of all backgrounds.

*Winterplace: Located in Virginia, it is very popular, which means long lines at the lifts and crowded runs. However, it does have a variety of runs and lodging.

If skiing is not your thing, but you are still ready for a winter weekend in the mountains, most resorts have outdoor ice skating and plenty of shopping to keep you busy.

By Laura King
Staff Artist

The quiet little town of McAdenville, with a population of only 832 residents, comes alive in spectacular fashion each year during the holiday season. The tradition of the McAdenville Christmas lights dates back to 1956 when the town's Men's Club decorated a few trees surrounding the community center. Nine trees were decorated in the first year, and the number of trees increased each year until over four hundred evergreens gave off a warm holiday glow in 1997.

This year marks the forty-third anniversary of the light pageantry and tradition. Literally millions of people have viewed the light fantasy in the past forty-two years; in 1997 alone, more than 300,000 vehicles passed through the tiny community. In 1980, Charles Kuralt gave nationwide televi-

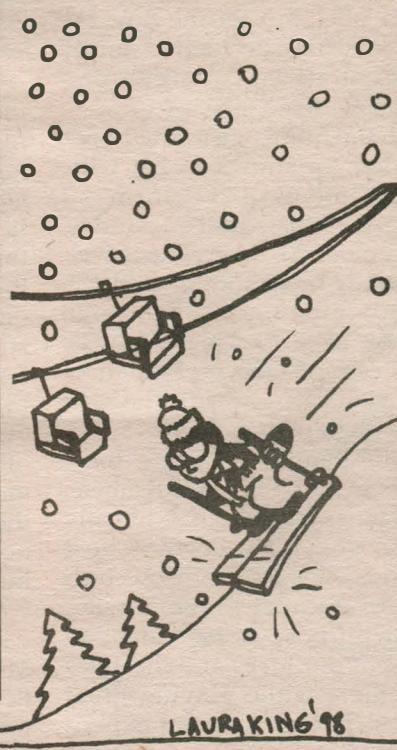
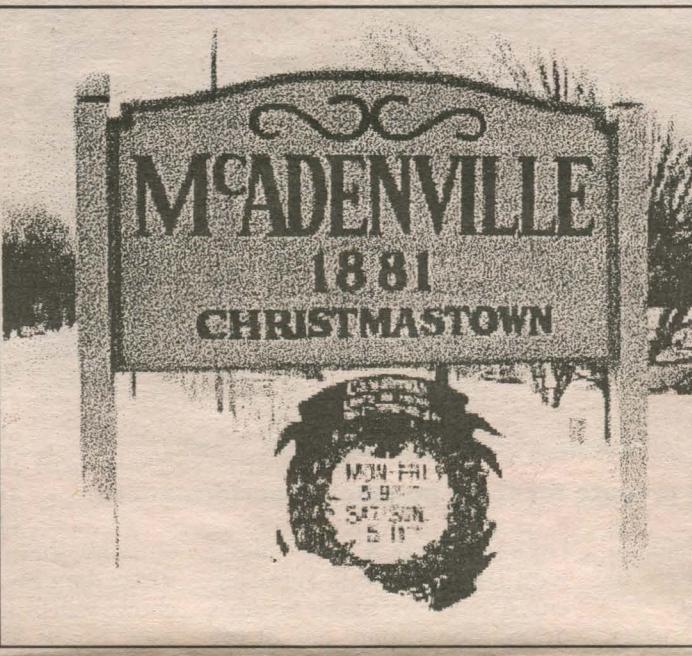
sion coverage to McAdenville and placed it on the map as Christmastown U.S.A.; in 1989, Christmastown was featured in Guidepost Magazine, and in 1990 it was given national television attention for the second

range from 500 to more than 4,200. One of viewers' favorite spots is the lake located near the heart of town. Seventy-five decorated trees circle the lake, in which a fountain is centered that jets water seventy-five feet in the air. A large display of Santa and his reindeer overlooks the lake. In addition, a life-size nativity scene is located about midway through the tour. Christmas carols are played through speakers all over town.

McAdenville's light fantasy glows nightly from December 1st through December 26th. The town is located in nearby Gaston County, about forty-five minutes from

south Charlotte. This extravaganza is a fun place to visit during the holidays with your friends, family or sweetie.

For more information or maps to McAdenville, look in the Charlotte Observer during December or Christmastown's website at <http://users.vnet/srankin/history.htm>.



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500 E. Morehead St., Suite 120
Charlotte, NC 28202
to help call: 334-995

Works to strengthen families through the group homes/family mentoring program, and provides safe and stable homes for abused and neglected children through foster-care programs.

Material Wishes: Umbrellas, irons, twin sheets and comforters, towels, school supplies, basketballs, footballs, gift certificates, toiletries.



United Family Services
Shelter for Battered Women
P.O. Box 220312
Charlotte, NC 28222
to help call: 332-2513

Provides a haven to battered women and their children, as well as individual and group counseling and preventive services to the community.

Material Wishes: Umbrellas, laundry and cleaning supplies, alarm clocks, women's clothing, children's socks and underwear, deodorant, toiletries.



Charlotte Pregnancy Care Center
1311 East Morehead St.
Charlotte, NC 28204
to help call: 372-5981

Provides free testing and support services to women who are dealing with pregnancy.

Material wishes: Maternity and infant clothing, disposable diapers, baby furniture, gift certificates for groceries, paper products, and financial donations.



Teen Health Connection
CMC-North Park
251 Eastway Dr.
Charlotte, NC 28213
to help call: 334-1013

Provides health care to young people ages 11-21, emphasizing a holistic family-centered approach.

Material wishes: Soda, juice, snack food, books, gift certificates for teens.

(Information taken from Charlotte Observer Giving Guide.)

South's own little piece of Broadway!

By Cat Traphagan
Staff Reporter

The South Meck auditorium is home to many students, countless productions and three wonderful teachers. Those who are fortunate enough to grace the theater stage know that the auditorium is a safe haven from which one can escape the rest of the world and become anything the imagination can fathom-- from a turkey to a psychotic lunatic. Not only those who are at home on stage find comfort in the theater. There are numerous "techies" to work the all-important backstage. But these facts could be true of most theaters. South Meck, however, has a theater to be proud of.

Our theater department at South is not just an extracurricular activity as it is at most schools. Instead, our theater is a *department*, which means that it has classes that carry extra quality points, semester exams and graded work. South's drama department has

as many classes as the magnet schools in Charlotte including Theater I-IV, Honors Drama A and B, Tech Theater I-III and a Dance/Choreography class. Everything that one needs to

Dance/Choreography class. Mrs. Guzman left the school campus this year as a full time teacher but she still teaches from her home. Her counterpart is Ms. Metz. They teach

in students, the Drama Department has won numerous awards this year at Contest. With the play *Lonely Planet*, South received a stage manager award, a set design award and two acting awards for Sean Sears and Jason Reynolds. South also received excellent ratings at Contest this year.

Such plays as *Oklahoma*, *Gold in the Hills* and *Odd Couple* have been produced at South. This year *The Wizard of Oz* is the play that is privileged enough to be produced. It is sure to be the best one yet. Not only does the theater department put on well known plays, it also showcases talent of its own with student-written, student-directed plays. These consist of Honors Drama A and B

students that write, star in and direct their own plays. The next shows will be January 29 and 30, 1999. South Meck's drama department is definitely a department to boast about. From contest awards to student shows, the theater has it all.



These Honors Drama students prepare for their up-coming performances.

Photograph courtesy of Julia Flumian

prepare for a theater major in college is found right here in South's own auditorium.

The teachers are as important as the classes. Ms. Curl has been at South for eighteen years. She teaches Theater I, II and III, all three Tech classes as well as the

Honors Drama A and B along with Theater I and II. These talented teachers make South's drama department one of the best in all of Charlotte Mecklenburg.

With the help of those teachers and the talent they inspire

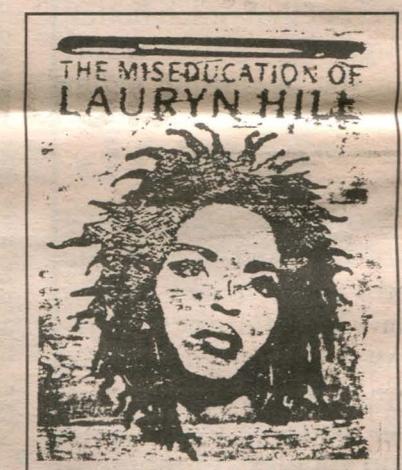
The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill, a CD review

By Natalie Smith
Staff Reporter

For those who are tired of the same old hooks and the same old beats, Lauryn Hill's *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill* is a breath of fresh air. By using her ingenuity to create a unique blend of original music and profound lyrics, Hill has quite possibly formulated one of the best albums this year.

The musical composition on this CD is both varied and original. Whether it is the smooth melodies of such songs as "Ex-Factor" and "Nothing Even Matters" or the coarse, deliberate sounds of songs like "Final Hour", the music remains fresh and artistic. Although the entire CD contains masterful instrumentation, piano and guitar are to be noted in particular.

The *Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*, which includes duets with Mary J. Blige and D'Angelo, is much more than just a few



There's more to Learning than what's in school

South hard core and emo band is led by senior Brock Towler

By Laura King
Staff Artist

Learning was established over two years ago and has become quite popular in the last six months. They generally play a mixture of hard core, punk, and emo music. Senior Brock Towler is the voice of the band and writes the lyrics along with Doug Lavoie, who also provides backup vocals and plays the bass guitar. Adam Baker plays the drums, and Travis Moose is the guitarist.

According to Brock, the band's name originated from Kinder Care, a learning center. They are inspired by musicians such as Hopesfall, Strongarm, Shai Hulud and RKL. Their lyrics address personal issues and tend to be very emotional. Learning generally sticks to their own music; however, they respect the artistry of most types of music even if they don't necessarily enjoy listening to them. Learning has numerous pub-



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

Learning in action at Tremont Music Hall

lic performances under their belt, having played at various places including Ramp Farm, Tremont Music Hall, and several

students' houses with the likes of Xperiment, Hopesfall and Second Nature. In the future, they hope to make their way

onto a hard core or independent emo label, but for the time being they have decided to simply concentrate on cutting a presentable demo tape.

In the future, Learning hopes to line up shows at Fat City. Learning will perform at Tremont Music Hall on Sunday, December 20. Everyone is welcome at their shows, and the band members encourage people to be open to their music and come to the performances even if they are not into the hard core scene.

The band has been a focal point in the lives of its members. The musicians are all extremely close and have become best friends over the years. According to vocalist Brock Towler, their purpose is, basically, "to present our ideas and lifestyles to others while playing great music, having fun, and experiencing life through our music."

The Sabres' Blade will feature a South Meck band each issue.

pleasant tunes and a few rhythmic beats, though. In fact, the most enthralling aspect of the album is its deep and meaningful lyrics. Hill discusses everything from unrequited love to the consequences of greed and deception. "Lost Ones", for instance, addresses those who "gain the whole world for the price of their soul." The song "Forgive Them Father" speaks of ones who "use kindness as ammunition to shoot down in the name of ambition." Another noteworthy track from the album is "To Zion", a song Hill wrote for her young son, Zion.

It seems also that *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill* reflects and is geared toward the younger generation. In "Everything is Everything", Hill specifically states that she "wrote these words for everyone who struggles in their youth." The interludes throughout the CD feature students in a classroom setting who give their insights on the subject of love.

The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill is a must-have CD. There is not a bad song to be found on the whole album. It is everything real music should be. Hill puts it best when she says, in the song "Superstar": "music is supposed to inspire." And that is exactly what she does.

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Four Student Written,
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Waiting
By Bethany Sterling

Hoxvoxshanderopus
By Amber McCloskey and Lisa Payerle

Webs In The Cupola
By Shannon Hurleigh

A Letter to Jillian
By Cat Traphagan

Time: Friday January 30 @ 7:00 PM
Place: South Meck Auditorium
Cost: \$4.00

Faces in the Crowd

Cameron Stinson: An outstanding athlete with a caring heart

By Nicole Ewing
Business Manager

"He is one of the hardest workers I have ever been around and has tremendous determination and dedication, which is his biggest strength," said Coach Shaughnessy of Cameron Stinson. It is no big surprise that this well-rounded junior is respected by coaches and peers.

Cameron is a very talented young man who follows in the footsteps of his role model, Emmitt Smith, of the Dallas Cowboys. "He is a running back that runs hard and never gives up no matter what the circumstances," he said.

Cameron knows what it takes to excel in sports. He is



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

Cameron Stinson holds the school record for the fullback with the most rushing yards in a game.

on South's varsity football team and was recently named WBTV Channel 3 Player of the Week. He holds the school record for the fullback with the most rushing yards in a game. He has also been recognized for his success on the varsity wrestling team by winning his weight division last season.

His extracurricular activities are impressive as well. He is a general member of Junior Council and FCA, and has played the cello in the school orchestra for the past three years.

Cameron helps instruct younger children through his church youth group at Wilson Memorial, and also takes the kids on field trips. He feels that giving back to the community is an important way to put his gifts to good use.

"I'd like to see North Carolina bring in the lottery."

Ryan Watson, 12th

"I would like to see greater technology than we have now."

Nancy Tate, 9th

"I would like to see a cure for AIDS."

Kelly Miller, 10th

"For people to accept one another not based on material things."

Sara Mason, 12th

"World hunger gone!"

Michelle Monteleane, 9th

"Everyone getting along!"

Erica McManus, 11th

"World Harmony."

Tara Presnell, 9th

"I would like to see an end to racism."

Erin Sattizahn, 12th

"Cure for Cancer."

Jared Elliott, 9th

"I would like to see Charlotte get a new transit system."

Montiese McKay, 12th

"I would like to see less fighting, killing, and stealing, and more peace in the world. Friendly people that want to help each other."

Latoya Young, 11th

"I would like to see our schools catch up with the fast paced technological world that we live in."

Thorn Baccich, 10th

"Seeing an American space station on the moon would be nice."

Josh Peeler, 12th

"I would like to have more students going to college so our civilization would advance."

Christian Klaus, 10th

"I would like to see students use drugs less and their minds more."

Beth Faulkner, 9th

"I would like to see more world peace and fewer wars across the ocean."

Amanda Porter, 11th

"World Peace."

Ayumu Minra, 9th

"Before the year 2000 I would like to see the homeless rate go down."

Tim Iyoob, 10th

Marian DiPerna: Hard work and dedication equal success

By Megan McKnight
Centerspread Editor

When one thinks of Marian DiPerna, the first thing that comes to mind is music. Her love of music started in fifth grade when she began playing the flute. Since then, she has participated in Honors District Band for five years and Charlotte Symphony Youth Orchestra for four years.

With the Youth Orchestra, she has been a first chair flute for the last two years and has had the opportunity to play with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra. She also performs with the Honors Woodwind Quintet and the Charlotte Youth Wind Ensemble.

Irene Maddox, Marian's late



Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

Marian DiPerna has performed with the Charlotte Symphony Youth Orchestra for the past four years.



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Laura King '98

Miriam Carroll to take position with school system

South teacher and instructional technology specialist Miriam Carroll has been promoted to the Instructional Technology Department at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System's Staff Development office. Friday, December 18 is her last day.

Carroll has been teaching at South for the past 24 years, but is excited about her new position. Her duties will include integrating curriculum and technology across the entire school system.

"South has been a part of my life since 1974, so it's going to be extremely hard to leave," said Carroll. "I'll miss it [South] terribly," she said.

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Nothing compares to the ACC

There is only one basketball conference in the nation where the last place team has the ability to beat the first place team. There is only one basketball conference in the nation where almost every game results in a change in the national poll. There is only one basketball conference in the nation where two-thirds of the conference makes the NCAA tournament. That conference is the ACC. As Dick Vitale, ESPN's college basketball analyst, said, "There is no better conference top to bottom than the ACC."

Compared to other conferences, none is better than the ACC. It has the best team in the nation, Duke, along with one other team, Maryland, in the top five. Both ESPN and *Sports Illustrated* picked six teams from the ACC to make the NCAA tournament. The greatest attribute or compliment given to the conference is that every team is a strong team. In

J. T. Crook Sports Commentary

comparison with other conferences, in the ACC, there is not the large gap of talent from the first place team to the last. In years past, huge upsets have occurred on an almost weekly basis. Last place NC State has pulled off an upset almost annually over first place UNC. The difference in talent between the first and last place team is not as great in the ACC as it is in other conferences.

The greatest judge of talent or competitiveness in a conference is how many teams it sends to the sixty-four team national tournament. The ACC regularly sends six teams, two-thirds of its members, to the tournament. In the 1990's, the ACC has had three national championships and has had a member in the Final Four seven out of the eight years. The conference has also won three national championships this decade, as opposed to the Big East who has had only one team in the final four in the nineties.

The ACC also has the best teams in the nation. Right now, UNC, Maryland, and Duke are all ranked among the top five teams in the nation.

After all the preseason hype is over, the true test of a conference's worth is its performance in the national tournament. I am prepared to write a retraction of this article if a Big East team should win the NCAA tournament. I believe right now that Duke University will win the national championship and that six teams will be selected to enter the tournament from the ACC, proving that the ACC is the best conference in the nation.

Sabre basketball confident about season

New talent should drastically improve the team

By Nathan Morabito
Sports Co-editor

After a season of rebuilding, South Mecklenburg's varsity basketball team will look to be one of the top teams in the Southwestern 4A conference. With three returning starters along with new talent, the Sabres will be more competitive than last year's team who finished with a record of 7-16 overall and 4-10 in the conference.

Players who will be making a definite impact include seniors Lorenzo Southern, Andy Gunn, Travis Feaster, and Montrice Stitt. Southern shot 52.1% from the field last year and Gunn made almost 55% of his three-pointers. Feaster and Stitt also have high field goal percentages which will improve the team's shooting even more.

Along with the returning seniors, a newcomer from Puerto Rico will definitely add power both on offense and on defense. Hector Valenzuela, a 6-8, 275-pound junior, could be the missing link which will put the Sabres in contention for a championship. His presence in the paint will force the opponents to focus on him, allowing his other teammates more open shots.



Travis Feaster looks for a teammate to pass to as Quavis Morgan signals that he is open and calls for the ball.

Other players who will affect the team's play include senior Quavis Morgan, Milton Sander, an East Gaston transfer, junior Jay Glunt, and sophomore Charlie Everett.

The Sabres' talent was evident in their excellent play at NC State's summer basketball camp. South Meck was able to finish first out of sixteen teams who attended.

Walter Boyle/Staff Photographer

In Coach Clarke's second season here as South's head coach, a conference title run is not totally out of the question. Coach Clarke said, "This year's team is more improved from last year's team. I am pleased with their hard work during the offseason. We have obtained a few new players and I feel we should have a successful season."

Associated Press Top 25 NCAA Basketball Poll

1. Connecticut	6-0
2. Maryland	9-0
3. Duke	7-1
4. Cincinnati	5-0
5. Kentucky	7-1
6. Stanford	4-2
7. North Carolina	8-1
8. Arizona	4-0
9. Purdue	7-1
10. Kansas	5-1
11. Indiana	8-1
12. New Mexico	5-0
13. Syracuse	7-1
14. Michigan St.	4-3
15. UCLA	4-2
16. Temple	4-3
17. Clemson	7-1
18. St John's	6-2
19. Oklahoma St.	4-2
20. Pittsburgh	7-2
21. Tennessee	6-2
22. Washington	4-2
23. Arkansas	5-2
24. Minnesota	5-0
25. Utah	4-3

This Poll was taken from the 12/8/98 edition of the Charlotte Observer

Sabre swim and dive out to sink competition

By Nicole Ewing
Business Manager

The 1998-99 swim and dive season is underway, and both the men's and women's teams are looking to take on the competition with full force. They started off their season crushing West Charlotte, and both the guys and girls are excited about the upcoming meets. "We have only been practicing for about a month, and they were already going best times at our first meet against West Charlotte," said Coach Diane Dave.

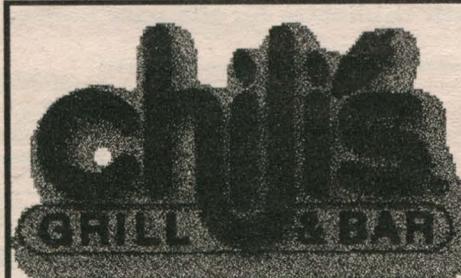
As always, the men's team is small, but strong. They will be led by seniors Jesse Rademacher and Brian Benfer, who contributed to the men's impressive third place finish at the regional meet last year. "Our team is going to be strong this year. We have most of the team returning since only two guys have graduated last year," said senior captain Rademacher. The women's team is very well-rounded, with talented swimmers of all ages, and strength in all strokes. Many freshmen and sophomores stack the team with talent for the upcoming season.

The backbone of the team comes from its strong leadership. "It's very important for us to be a close team," said captain Melody Milroy. "Seeing support from teammates makes it much easier to go fast in the water."

The Diving team is not to be overlooked. Brett Emmerton and Whitney Rothrock will

hopefully bring the dive team into the spotlight. Brett has been diving for years and was featured in the Charlotte Observer as the diver to watch this season, while Whitney has a solid gymnastic background.

Providence and Myers Park will be South's toughest meets, but the Sabres are not intimidated. Coach Dave said "I know everyone will swim their best, and with hard work, we will hopefully come out on top."



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Like No Place Else

South wrestling looking to take it all Senior trio leads team towards playoffs

By J.T. Crook
Sports Co-Editor

Sabre wrestling is looking towards its most promising season in a long time. With nine returning starters from last year, seven of whom were All-Conference wrestlers, the Sabres should compete for the conference championship. The team made it to the state duals last year and are looking to win it all this year.

To lead the team, a talented trio of returning seniors will try to win their first championship in their final year. Morris Sanders, Scott Wilson, and Brian Spaulding will set an example for the younger members with their hard work and determination. Both Spaulding and Sanders have started their seasons with personal records of 7-0 and 6-1 respectively.

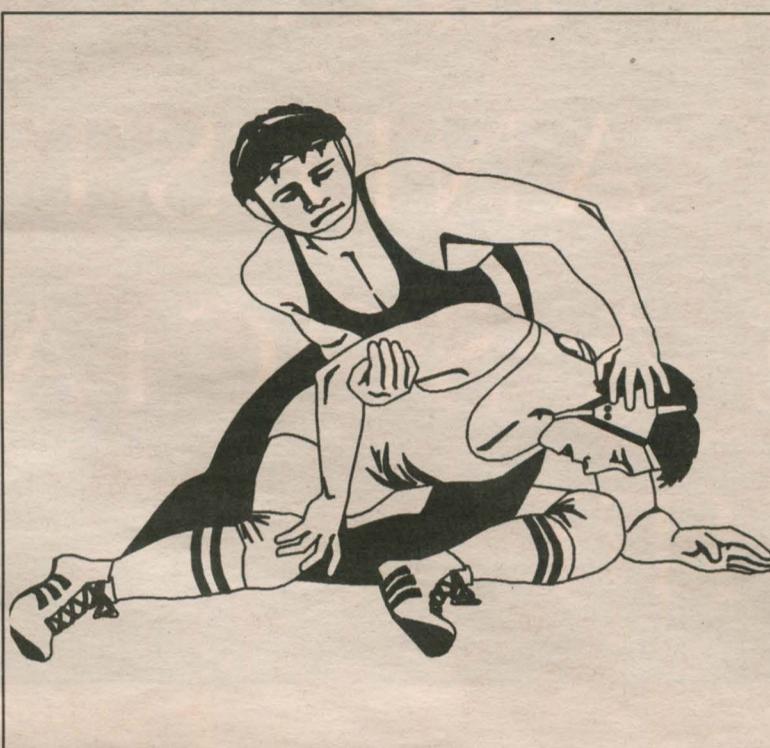
The team also has one member who is going to compete for the individual state championship this year. Sanders was the regional champion in the individual bracket in his weight class last year. As a competitor in the heaviest weight class, Morris is generally left to take on the strongest person from the other team. His ability to win at this level shows his talent as a wrestler and his own personal

strength.

Aside from Morris, there are several other wrestlers who are having great seasons. Matt Fay is 6-1 along with two-sport star Cameron Stinson. Steve

coast."

A good showing at this tournament is important but their focus remains on the conference tournament and conference rivals Independence and Myers



Houghton is also 6-1. Overall the team is 4-3 and is looking forward to the Tiger Classic Wrestling Tournament in Chapel Hill over the winter break, a tournament Coach Kendrick called "the toughest on the east

Park. A win against the Patriots and Mustangs is top priority. They are both tough teams but wins should give the Sabres momentum to carry them through the playoffs and win the conference championship.

Girls' basketball undefeated

By Jessica Ambrose
Staff Reporter

South Meck's Lady Sabre basketball team has had a great start this season with their perfect 4-0 record. Their promising start has left expectations for a successful season.

The Lady Sabres are two-time conference champions and would like to add a third championship to their record. The team is ranked 9 in Observer's Sweet Sixteen and is expected to do well this season. Their goal is to advance to at least the sec-

ond round of the state playoffs, which is realistic considering their performance in recent years. However, their main hope is to win the state tournament.

Though the Sabres remain undefeated, Coach Gaston stated that despite their athletic ability, the team lacks depth and experience. Despite this challenge, the team seems eager to win and is dedicated to victory. Coach Gaston estimated that by about the middle of February, his team will have gained valuable big game experience, which may aid them in the playoffs.

The team's successes thus far can be attributed not only to their talent, but also to cooperation within the team. Coach Gaston said, "The team works together, which proves beneficial to everyone." With a playing style that reflects this attitude, the lady Sabres can expect to accomplish a great deal this season. Though the team has had a great start, they have yet to face their toughest opponents, the West Charlotte Lions and the East Mecklenburg Eagles, but with this winning attitude, the Sabres are still looking to achieve their goal.

South Mecklenburg Winter Sports Schedule

Varsity Basketball

Dec. 17 @Providence
Dec. 28 Leon Brogden Tourney @UNCW
Jan. 5 INDEPENDENCE
Jan. 8 East Meck @Grady Cole Center
Jan. 15 BUTLER
Jan. 20 MYERS PARK
Jan. 22 GARINGER
Jan. 26 @West Char.
Jan. 29 PROVIDENCE
Feb. 2 @Independence
Feb. 9 @Butler
Feb. 12 @Myers Park
Feb. 16 Southwestern 4A Tourney @Providence

Swim and Dive

Jan. 7 Myers Park @Providence
Jan. 8 Independence @Providence
Jan. 14 Garinger @Providence
Jan. 27 East Meck @Providence

Wrestling

Dec. 17 PROVIDENCE
Dec. 22 Tiger Classic @Chapel Hill
Jan. 5 @Independence
Jan. 8 EAST MECK
Jan. 15 @Butler
Jan. 20 @Myers Park
Jan. 22 @Garinger
Jan. 26 WEST. CHAR.
Jan. 30 Conference Tourney @South
Feb. 12-13 Regionals @Providence
Feb. 19-20 State Tourney @Ind. Arena

The Big East #1?

Over the past few years, many conferences including the ACC, SEC, and Pac-10, have been favored as being the number one conference in college basketball. Although the Big East has occasionally been thrown into the mix, they are frequently overlooked for the title of premier conference in the NCAA.

When you think of the Big East conference, Connecticut, Georgetown, and Syracuse, are considered as the top teams that will represent the conference in the NCAA tournament. Although the Big East does not receive a great deal of attention, they routinely have four or five teams competing in March Madness every year. So when will they be recognized as a true contender? Quite possibly this year.

With an entire team of returning starters, the Connecticut Huskies will look to dominate

Nathan Morabito

Sports Commentary

both the Big East and the rest of the nation. With Richard Hamilton, a possible candidate for NCAA player of the year, and point guard Khalid El-Amin leading the top backcourt in the nation, a championship run is definitely not out of the question.

Another top contender will be the always tough Syracuse Orangemen. Three experienced starters will be returning from last season, including Etan Thomas, one of the leading shot blockers in the nation. Together they have established one of the best backcourts in the nation, which should lead Syracuse to another exciting postseason.

The St. John's Red Storm, with one of the best recruiting classes in the nation, and the Miami Hurricanes will be two more definite NCAA tourney teams. Along with the Red Storm and the Hurricanes, the Pittsburgh Panthers, Providence Friars, and Georgetown Hoyas will fight to place another Big East team in the NCAA tournament. Watch out for possible sleeper team Villanova University as well.

Do not overlook the Big East conference this year, because come March, various teams from the conference will be advancing in postseason play. Not only will the Big East be one of the prime conferences, but one of the teams may very well be crowned champions at the close of the season.

If a Big East team fails to win the national championship and an ACC team does win it, I, like my fellow Co-Editor, am willing to write a retraction of this article.



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